MoneyActive

Helping people to manage their finances

MoneyActive

Impact report 2011

A volunteer-led programme of free community based financial skills training sessions

Supported by Nationwide

Delivered by citizens advice bureau

Foreword

In the current economic climate, it's more important than ever that we do all we can to help people gain the skills, knowledge and confidence they need to manage their money effectively. Thanks to the substantial support of Nationwide Building Society we have been able to embark on this innovative programme to train and support volunteers to deliver financial capability sessions in their communities. We have also developed our online money management resources.

Citizens Advice Bureaux already deal with well over two million debt problems a year and we see the devastating impact debt burdens have on people's lives. The MoneyActive programme is giving a massive boost to the ability of our bureaux to help people help themselves avoid their debts getting out of control.

Gillian Guy, Chief Executive, Citizens Advice

Nationwide is committed to helping the communities in which we operate and one of our top priorities is ensuring financial education is readily available for children and adults. In addition to the support our branches offer our customers we recognise the role the Citizens Advice service plays in providing free, independent and impartial education and advice. We are very proud to partner Citizens Advice and to help increase their capacity to support the community.

Graeme Hughes, Director Human Resources and Corporate Affairs, Nationwide Building Society

About MoneyActive

MoneyActive is a joint venture between Citizens Advice and Nationwide Building Society, designed to help people manage their finances. It's the Nationwide Building Society's biggest community investment project running to £3 million over three years.

Nationwide is providing the funding and support that is helping Citizens Advice to train volunteers to deliver independent and impartial financial education. After two years of the three year programme more than 1,100 volunteers have already been involved and MoneyActive has exceeded its delivery targets of reaching 100,000 people. Citizens Advice is offering the education through its bureaux network across the UK and supporting the initiative through a dedicated project team, together with resources for running and marketing MoneyActive and training volunteers.

Group training

Bureaux work with local organisations to arrange MoneyActive sessions in their local communities. The practical and informal group activities aim to equip people with the skills, knowledge and understanding to enable them to budget, borrow and save with confidence, and to avoid unmanageable debt.

Individual training

Volunteers in many bureaux offer one to one financial education to individual clients as an integrated part of the debt advice service.

Volunteers

21,500 people volunteer for the Citizens Advice service in roles from advising to administration, IT support and trusteeship. Volunteering is certainly not new to the service, but volunteers carrying out financial capability training is. The drive to recruit MoneyActive volunteers since the start of the programme in April 2009, has led to a significant increase in the number of financial capability volunteers across the whole of the Citizens Advice service, as the benefits of this preventative work are recognised by bureaux and their communities.

Self help resources

The money management pages of the Citizens Advice information website have been developed and updated under the MoneyActive project. Online money management advice and information, interactive budgeting tools and letter templates are available 24 hours a day for anyone who needs them, reaching people who have not attended MoneyActive sessions and providing extra follow up information for those who have. These pages on www.adviceguide.org.uk now receive over 150,000 visits a month.

MoneyActive achievements

Key achievements April 2009 – March 2011

- More than **1,100** MoneyActive volunteers recruited.
- Over **32,000** people have attended MoneyActive training sessions.
- Another **90,000** are estimated to have benefitted from training to frontline workers in partner organisations who can in turn help their clients.
- There have been over **two million** visits to the money management pages of www.adviceguide.org.uk
- After taking part in the MoneyActive training nearly 70 per cent of people felt 'very confident' or 'fairly confident' in dealing with their finances and most expected to take some action.
- Bureaux have worked with more than **700** local partner organisations.
- More than **120** bureaux (more than 25 per cent of the total number of Citizens Advice bureaux across England and Wales) have participated in MoneyActive to date, along with projects in Scotland and Northern Ireland

MoneyActive has already demonstrated numerous benefits for the people who attend training sessions, for the volunteers involved, and for partnership working in local communities.

Making a difference through MoneyActive

Helping people to take control of their finances

MoneyActive aims to give people the skills, knowledge and confidence to manage their finances better and to be able to take action to improve their situation.

In April 2011 we commissioned an independent evaluation report of the sessions. The feedback from participants after the training showed that MoneyActive is achieving these aims.

- The majority of people reported that the training had increased their confidence in their ability to manage their finances – 69 per cent reported feeling 'fairly confident' or 'very confident' after the training, compared to only 34 per cent before.
- When asked about changes they intended to make following the training, 30 per cent of people said they intended to set up a budget to help them manage their money. Just under a quarter said they planned to change how they save money and 10 per cent planned to change how they borrow money. Seven per cent said they would look for debt advice.
- After the training almost 40 per cent said they would open a savings account and a fifth planned to open a bank account –15 per cent intended to get in touch with their local credit union and a similar percentage planned to get a better deal from their energy supplier.
- In follow up telephone interviews, everyone spoken to took a positive view of the training and regarded their attendance as worthwhile. Three quarters said that they had changed how they managed their money since taking the training.

''Following completion of a spending diary, one client realised how much he was spending each week on cigarettes and this has prompted him to make an appointment at his GP surgery to seek help with stopping smoking. This is a fantastic result, which will benefit both the client's health and financial wellbeing."

Sherborne CAB

"I didn't realise how much doorstep lenders charge and I didn't know what Credit Unions do. I will never borrow from a doorstep lender again!'

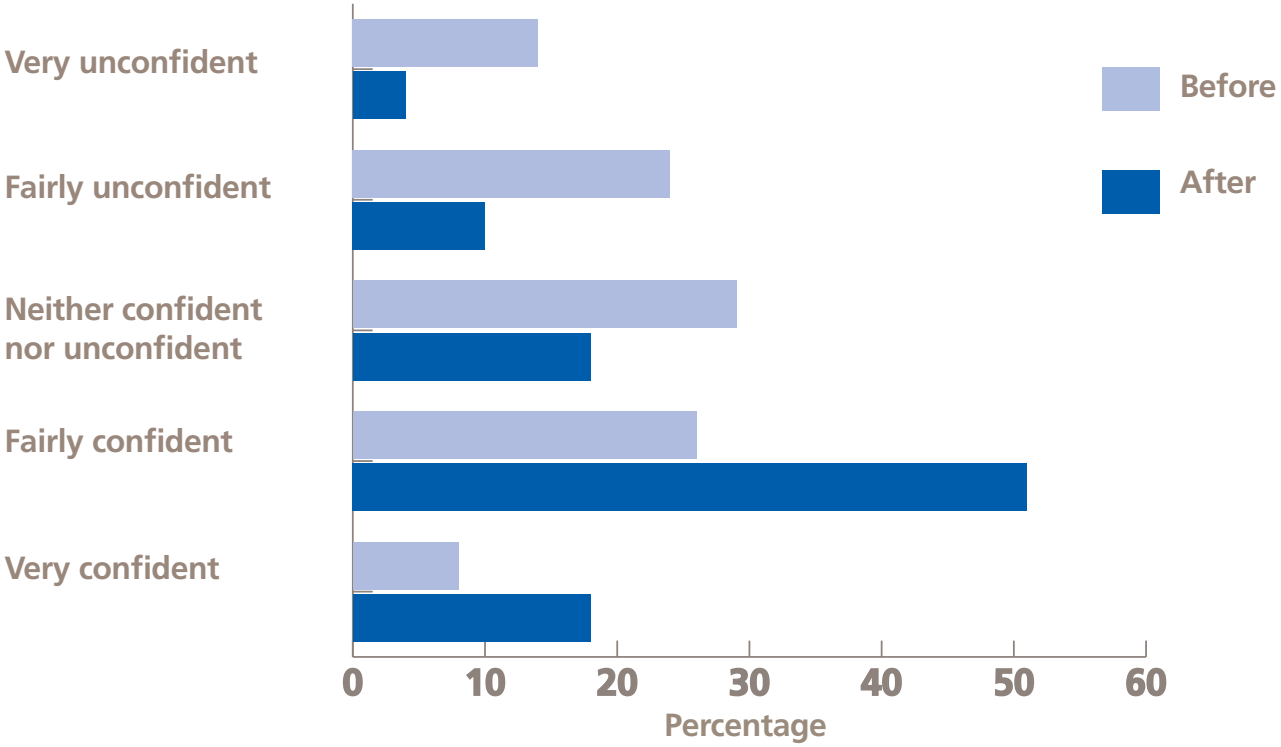
Adult mental health charity service user

"One session resulted in an 82 year old client saving £60 a month on his telephone bill when it was revealed that the package he was on gave free calls at weekends and evenings, but did not cover the time during the day when he and his wife made lengthy calls."

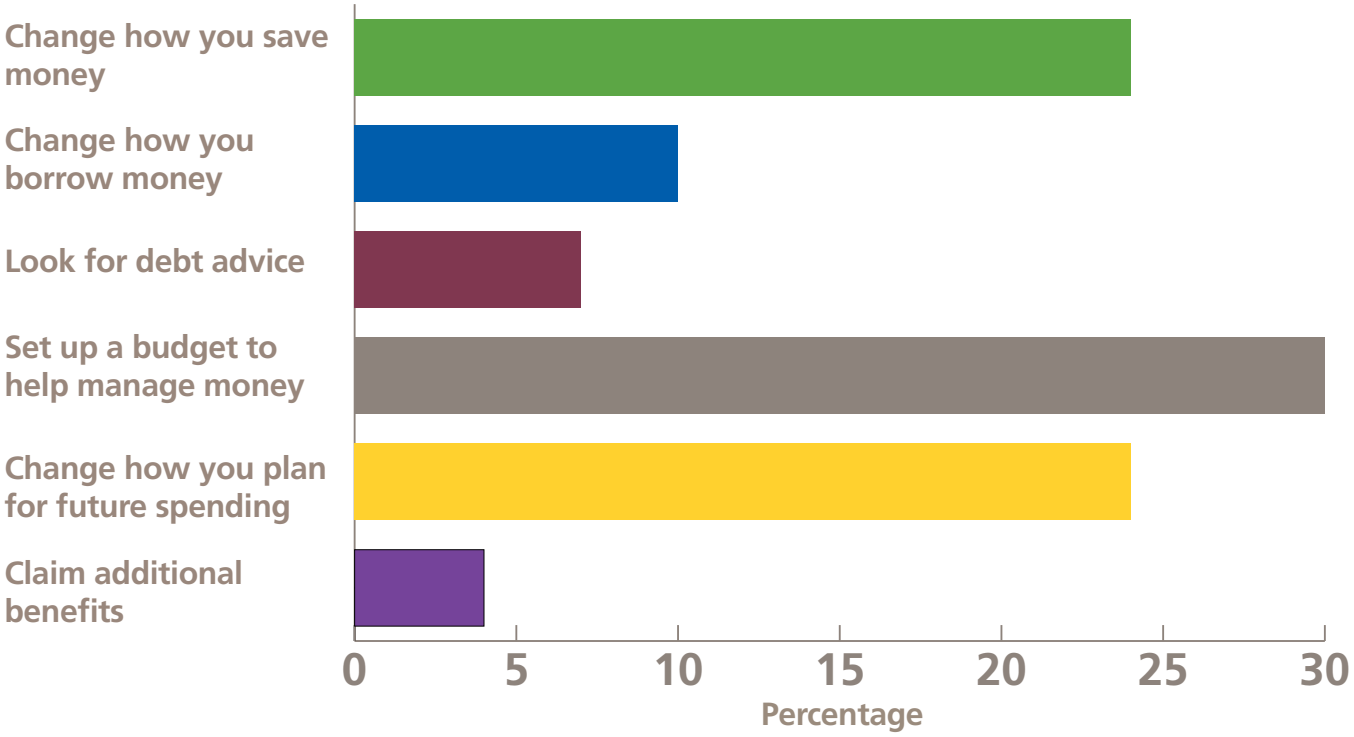
West Oxfordshire CAB

Making a difference through MoneyActive

How confident are you managing your finances?



What do you plan to change about how you manage your money?



Case studies

Practical help on saving money

A MoneyActive volunteer visited Mrs Cooper,* at home, as she was not able to get out of the house due to ill-health. The volunteer helped Mrs Cooper look more carefully at her finances, something new to her as her deceased husband had managed their finances. She realised that she had been paying more than once for breakdown cover for her household appliances and was able to cancel three separate policies which were costing her hundreds of pounds . She has also decided to replace her inefficient old boiler with a new one using a grant from the Warm Front scheme.

Budgeting and planning ahead

Alisha is a parent who, as a member of a mums group, attended sessions at a school. Both she and her partner are in reasonably well paid jobs but never managed to save. The family were operating several bank accounts and used overdraft facilities on each to cover their expenses. As a result of the session on budgeting, they realised how much of their income was being used up by interest and bank charges:

"I have attended four sessions at the school. Every session has been informative and productive. When I started the sessions my finances were a real mess. All my bank accounts were overdrawn and I was paying fees for this privilege. I had no idea of what was leaving the accounts, nor when, and had no savings for anything. We spent what we had on what we needed at the time.

Thanks to the advice and teaching my accounts are now managed like clockwork, all my debts are gone and everything is planned and budgeted for even down to the treats and takeaways. We now budget and are saving for the car's MOT tax and even next Christmas. Our new found money sense has changed our lives for the better."

* Names changed to protect identity
Photos posed by models

Developing volunteers

"Being a financial capability trainer gave my career a new direction. Getting a job out of volunteering was a real bonus."

Lucy, MoneyActive trainer, Bury St Edmunds CAB

"I have relished the challenge of delivering training to people from all walks of life. I particularly enjoy working as part of a team again, and using my training as a teacher to make delivery of any sessions interesting and memorable. The past year has given me a real sense of achievement and worth as well as reaffirming my self confidence."

Helen, MoneyActive trainer, Liverpool CAB

"I love the idea of working with young people, giving them information on managing their money. I have been fortunate in my education and want to give something back."

Chris, MoneyActive trainer, Sheffield Debt Support Unit

Developing and using the skills and knowledge of volunteers

MoneyActive has been groundbreaking in creating a brand new set of training and development opportunities for volunteers. There are a range of roles associated with the project, including organising and preparing for sessions, delivering training, marketing and publicity. The training programme for MoneyActive volunteers who plan to deliver sessions includes a two day course on group training skills and a one day follow up workshop, together with e-learning and online resources. MoneyActive attracts new volunteers to bureaux, particularly young graduates and those with finance and teaching backgrounds. Many existing CAB volunteers are also keen to take up this new role and get involved in preventative work.

- Volunteers were very positive about their experiences on the project. Increased confidence, a sense of personal achievement and the feeling that they are really helping people are the main benefits reported.
- Over 120 volunteers have accessed paid employment, or returned to full time education, following their involvement in the MoneyActive programme.
- Money Active volunteers are younger than the CAB volunteer profile (42 per cent under 45 within MoneyActive as opposed to 30 per cent across CAB) and more ethnically diverse (80 per cent white British as opposed to 89 per cent). There is a higher percentage of male volunteers (40 per cent compared to 34 per cent).

Citizens Advice consider this to be significant in diversifying their volunteer base, which is a strategic aim for the service.

Partnership working

Working in partnership with local communities

Citizens Advice Bureaux have strong links with organisations in their local communities. MoneyActive is building on these relationships as MoneyActive volunteers deliver money management sessions to both individuals and to frontline workers from partner organisations, in groups or one-to-one sessions. MoneyActive bureaux have worked with more than 700 partner organisations and are able to reach more people through these partnerships, working for the benefit of the whole community.

Examples of groups worked with include: housing associations, family centres, service personnel, ex-offenders, job seekers, college students, credit unions, people with disabilities and refugees.

The response of partner organisations on the benefits of the training has been especially strong with:

- 81 per cent of workers from partner organisations saying they had 'quite a lot of knowledge' or 'a huge amount of knowledge' about financial matters after training compared to only 30 per cent before the session
- 84 per cent saying they felt 'fairly confident' or 'very confident' about giving financial capability advice to clients, almost double than before the session
- 82 per cent saying that they would recommend the training to other organisations.

''I enjoyed your workshop. I thought that you made a subject, which I anticipated might be a bit dry for me, very interesting. So thank you very much – from someone who hates doing anything which involves figures!''

Community mental health worker, Sheffield

"The workers at one of the SureStart centres have given very good feedback about the budgeting session that was run there with teenage mums. She emphasised that they will be able to do a budget with confidence when they move into a property of their own."

Doncaster CAB

"The training provided proved invaluable knowledge especially to new housing staff. They are now able when speaking to distressed or vulnerable tenants who are experiencing financial problems, to tell them how the system works and where to go to get advice to start to sort their situations out."

Projects Officer, South Lakes Housing

MoneyActive projects

Barnet

Bedworth, Rugby and Nuneaton*

Birmingham

Blackburn*

Blackpool

Blyth**

Braintree, Halstead & Witham**

Brighton & Hove**

Bury St Edmunds

Caerphilly

Canterbury

Castle Point*

Chelmsford*

Cheltenham Cirencester & Tewkesbury

Cheshire West*

Chester le Street*

Chiltern

Copeland*

Cornwall (Liskeard)

Coventry*

Croydon

Dartford**

Derby

Didcot*

Diss*

Doncaster

East End

East Staffordshire

East Yorkshire

Enfield**

Exeter

Garston

Gateshead**

Gwynedd & De Ynys Môn

Hammersmith and Fulham

Harlow

Hartlepool*

Hillingdon and Ealing*

Kingston

Kirklees**

Lancaster

Lewisham*

Maldon

Mid-Derbyshire**

Morecambe

Newark*

North Liverpool

Northampton*

Norwich & West Norfolk

Oxford*

Oxfordshire

Pitsmoor

Plymouth*

Portsmouth

Powys

Reigate and Banstead District*

Richmond

Richmondshire*

Rochford and Rayleigh*

Rotherham**

Royal Courts of Justice**

Rushmoor**

Sheffield Debt Support

Sheffield Mental Health

Sherborne

Sleaford**

South Lakeland

Stevenage

Stockton and District

Stoke on Trent*

Stroud*

Sutton

Swale

Telford

Three Rivers*

Torfaen*

Uttlesford

Waverley

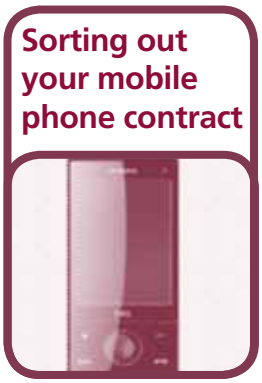
Wiltshire

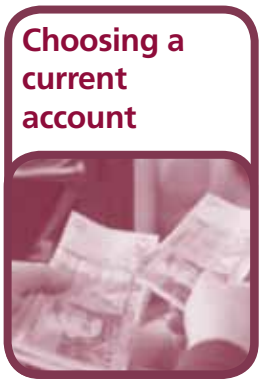
Ynys Mon

MoneyActive is also being delivered through Citizens Advice Scotland and Citizens Advice Northern Ireland.

* new from April 2011, ** to March 2011

MoneyActive Sessions





MoneyActive sessions are designed to be informal, interesting and interactive and are tailored to the needs of the individual or the group.

The Citizens Advice service

Citizens Advice Bureaux deliver advice services from over 3,500 community locations in England and Wales, run by 382 individual charities. Each individual bureau is a vital part of the local community it serves, helping people resolve their money, legal and other problems by providing information and advice and by influencing policymakers.

The advice we provide is free, independent, confidential, and impartial, and is available to everyone. Information and advice can also be accessed on our website www.adviceguide.org.uk

Nationwide Building Society

As a UK based mutual, Nationwide Building Society exists solely for the benefit of our members, we help them and their families meet their financial needs in a sustainable, responsible and secure way – as we have done since 1846, in a manner that is open, honest, and fair.

Corporate Responsibility at Nationwide is all about being a responsible Financial Services provider whilst having a positive impact on our community and environment.

For further information about MoneyActive in your area

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